

**CITY OF MILWAUKEE POLICE DEPARTMENT
NEWS RELEASE**

Edward A. Flynn, Chief of Police

DATE: SEPTEMBER 7, 2009

NEWS RELEASE # 09-24

CONTACT: ANNE E. SCHWARTZ

414-935-7209

MILWAUKEE POLICE, DA ANNOUNCE SERIAL KILLER ARREST

A man whose DNA is linked to nine unsolved homicides of females over a 21-year period has been arrested by Milwaukee Police, Chief Edward A. Flynn and Milwaukee County District Attorney John Chisholm announced Monday, September 7, 2009.

The DNA belonging to Walter E. Ellis, 49, of Milwaukee, was found on the bodies of nine women; eight prostitutes and one female who was a runaway who was involved in the drug trade. The homicides occurred between 1986 and 2007 on Milwaukee's north side.

"This case was solved with shoe leather and science," said Chief Flynn. "Continuing advances in DNA technology have enabled us to link these homicide cases, and it was good police work pursuing numerous leads that led to the arrest of a suspect."

The Milwaukee Police Department's Homicide Task Force Cold Case Unit was formed in May of this year but the MPD never forgot the victims whose brutal murders spanned 21 years. Many tools were used to develop suspects including resources from the Wisconsin Regional Crime Lab and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The analysts sifted through years of evidence samples resubmitted by the Task Force. As the technology evolved, the results improved.

As evidence that Milwaukee Police have submitted and resubmitted to the Wisconsin Regional Crime Lab continues to be returned, the Task Force may be linking additional homicides to this DNA profile.

The Milwaukee County District Attorney's office already has charged two cold cases unrelated to the Ellis case and one awaits charging due to the work of the Task Force.

By the numbers, evidence reviewed by the Milwaukee Task Force includes:

- More than 700 names that were contained in the nine homicide files;
- Researching 15,000 sexual assault investigations spanning 23 years;
- Reviewed about 6,000 prostitution-related investigations and arrests
- 2,000 arrests in the geographic areas where the bodies were discovered were queried over a 15-year period
- 1,000 names queried through the Wisconsin Department of Corrections
- Searched the state DNA databank of 125,000 people; 6 million in the national DNA databank

#